

Alderman White School

Chilwell Lane, Bramcote, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG9 3DU

Inspection dates

8–9 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive principal and other senior leaders provide strong direction and leadership. The school is now improving rapidly.
- School leaders and the board of directors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that still need development.
- Leaders have taken effective action to make sure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good or better. Pupils learn exceptionally well in modern foreign languages.
- The sixth form has improved and is now good. Sixth-form students attend well and are punctual. They make good progress in both academic and vocational courses, but their progress is not yet exceptional.
- Directors have the skills to challenge and support senior leaders. The board ensures that pupils have ambitious achievement targets. It watches pupils' progress towards these targets carefully.
- Pupils now make good progress in both English and mathematics. Pupils' examination results in these subjects are above national averages. Standards in mathematics have improved but, in key stage 4, some pupils find complex problem-solving activities difficult.
- The curriculum matches most pupils' needs. Pupils of all abilities have opportunities to succeed. Pupils have exceptional opportunities linked to learning languages.
- Leaders make careful checks on the quality of teaching. These checks take into account pupils' work and the progress they make.
- Pupils' conduct is exemplary. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils are usually self-disciplined and follow the school's rules without much prompting from adults.
- In 2016, the school's pupils reached higher standards in examinations than pupils nationally. Disadvantaged pupils and some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, however, made less progress than others at the school. Leaders have ensured that these pupils are now making better progress.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, however, has not improved as rapidly as that of others.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise achievement by:
 - including more problem-solving activities in the mathematics curriculum in key stage 3, so that pupils get off to a flying start with their GCSE studies
 - ensuring that disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities attend regularly.

- Secure exceptional progress among post-16 students by ensuring that sixth-form teaching strategies routinely consider the needs of students.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive principal, together with the head of school and the head of college, have been relentless in their determination to improve the quality of education the school provides. Leaders carefully check the quality of teaching through regular visits to classrooms and by sampling pupils' work. They have set high expectations for teaching which they support teachers to reach. Leaders also review pupils' examination results when considering the effectiveness of teaching. Through better quality teaching, pupils' achievements have improved since the last inspection, and continue to improve.
- School leaders and directors make effective use of performance management to reward and encourage staff. Leaders have developed a team of well-motivated teaching and support staff, who share their ambitions for pupils. Leaders help teachers to improve their practice through well-planned training, which carefully takes into account the needs of pupils. For example, inspectors saw the positive impact of recent training on teachers' questioning skills during classroom visits.
- Leaders set high targets for pupils' achievement. They discuss these targets with pupils during 'target tackling time', a school-wide routine, where pupils stop normal activities to reflect on their progress. Pupils want to succeed because school leaders and their teachers believe that they can.
- Leaders have made improvements to the curriculum to challenge pupils of all abilities. Previously low- and middle-ability pupils took too few qualifications to achieve their potential. Pupils now follow a stimulating programme that prepares most of them for the English Baccalaureate group of qualifications. The curriculum offers many rich opportunities for pupils to think about equality and fairness.
- Pupils have access to wide-ranging extra-curricular opportunities, which they and their parents appreciate. Leaders use the school's strengths in languages to enrich pupils' cultural experiences. Among many opportunities open to pupils is the school's 'Confucius Classroom' initiative, which introduces pupils to Chinese culture. Through this programme, pupils have the chance to get involved in a variety of activities, which range from learning Mandarin to taking part in tai chi. Parents appreciate these special opportunities and understand how they are preparing pupils for 21st-century living.
- Leaders make good use of the extra funding they receive to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They use this funding to give well-targeted support to pupils. The achievement of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving.
- The school supports pupils who start Year 7 with below-average attainment well, using literacy and numeracy catch-up funding. The school plans individual programmes for each of these pupils, which focus on the reading skills that they need to understand all their subjects.
- Leaders encourage parents to become involved in their child's education. Almost all parents felt that the school responded well to their questions or concerns. The school has set up a parents' forum, where parents can have a voice in the school's development.

- Leaders ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about British values across the curriculum in subjects such as modern studies. The school also takes practical opportunities to reinforce British values through, for example, opportunities for student democracy, such as the school council. The school's vision for education is 'INSPIRE' (Integrity, Nurture, Success, Perseverance, Innovation, Responsibility, Engagement). Leaders reinforce this vision, and the links to British values, daily.

Governance of the school

- The governing body, known as the board of directors, makes a good contribution to the school's development. Directors are exceptionally knowledgeable about education. This has enabled them to develop a clear-sighted view of what makes a good school. They have a deep understanding of academy accountabilities and meet all their legal responsibilities.
- Directors are well trained, particularly about safeguarding, and the board includes a director who has considerable skills in this area. The director makes sure that leaders follow safeguarding policies by making regular checks.
- The board challenges senior leaders robustly when any groups of pupils are not achieving well enough. Following the last inspection, inspectors recommended a review of the school's use of the pupil premium. The board ensured that this review took place and that leaders responded comprehensively to the findings of the review. This has led to improvements in the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's leaders have established a safeguarding culture in which staff play an important role in keeping pupils safe. Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for at school. School staff give high-quality care to vulnerable pupils. Pupils can speak to staff at 'The Base' if they have any concerns. Many parents told inspectors that they appreciate this part of the school's work.
- Safeguarding training for staff and directors is helpful and up to date. Staff know when a pupil is at risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation. They report their concerns at once. School staff make sure that working relationships between them and other agencies are strong. This helps to protect children. Staff also keep close contact with parents and carers to help keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers follow the school's policies for achieving high-quality teaching, learning and assessment. Inspection activities and the school's own records show that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better. This consistency has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

- Teaching is exceptional in modern foreign languages and pupils make rapid progress because of this. Pupils' engagement with their language learning is notable. The expectations in this subject are very high and pupils rise to the challenge. For example, pupils in Year 7 already speak French confidently and fluently.
- Teachers plan interesting and challenging tasks for pupils that match their abilities and engage them well in learning. The thinking of the most able pupils is stretched effectively and they make good progress.
- The school's teachers plan effective and enjoyable learning experiences for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers also make good use of additional adults in classrooms to support learning. Many teaching assistants have good knowledge about the subjects they support. This helps pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to deepen their learning and make faster progress.
- Teachers support the development of reading skills for pupils of all ages and abilities. The school encourages pupils to have 'drop everything and read' time every day. This quiet time is exceptionally well kept and enjoyed by pupils. Teachers email recent academic journals to sixth-form students, to help support their studies. Staff provide broadsheet newspapers in the school cafeteria for pupils to read. The school is involved in the Carnegie reading initiative, which encourages competitive reading. Pupils in Year 7 told inspectors that the school encouraged them to read more than they had read at primary school.
- Homework contributes well to pupils' learning. Teachers use homework thoughtfully to develop pupils' understanding. The school has carefully checked systems to make sure that pupils complete homework on time. The school encourages parents to become involved in pupils' homework using links on the school website; parents told inspectors that they value this connection with school life.
- Learning relationships are productive and supportive. Teachers have strong classroom management skills which they use to direct pupils' learning. They consistently reinforce the school's expectations of behaviour and create an environment where pupils can learn without interruption.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. Most also have a range of strategies to support pupils' learning. Some of these strategies are highly creative. Inspectors saw several examples of lessons where pupils excelled because they had alternative ways of learning. In one lesson, pupils learned through a multi-sensory approach that deeply engaged them in the language of advertising.
- Teachers ask searching questions which deepen pupils' understanding and encourage them to achieve at a high level. Teachers encourage pupils to respond to questions, even when pupils are not sure about the accuracy of their answers. This means that pupils can learn from their mistakes. Teachers give helpful feedback in line with the school's policy.
- Teachers plan opportunities to enrich pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education as part of the curriculum. For example, in an English lesson, pupils explored the way society treats people who have disabilities through discussing the novel 'Of Mice and Men'. The teacher used the lesson to explore social attitudes to disability and the extent to which these have changed over time.

- As a result of increasingly effective teaching since the last inspection, pupils are now making faster progress in English and mathematics and it now matches national averages. Some pupils find the problem-solving skills they need to make rapid progress in GCSE mathematics challenging, however. This is because they have had limited opportunities to develop these skills in key stage 3.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- School staff make pupils' physical and emotional well-being a priority. Parents are very positive about the care their children receive.
- Pupils are confident learners who can express themselves clearly. This is because the school recognises the importance of speaking and listening skills in effective communication, and promotes these skills. Pupils' oral skills make a good contribution to their learning.
- Pupils are successful learners who approach their studies very positively. They are keen to learn and look after their books and equipment well. The presentation of pupils' written work is exceptionally good.
- The school's anti-bullying approach is effective. Very few instances of bullying have been recorded. Pupils told inspectors that they were confident that staff would resolve bullying concerns if they had any. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe from bullying and other risks through the curriculum and in assemblies. Leaders ensure that pupils learn how to stay safe online and parents appreciate this work.
- Communications with the parents of vulnerable pupils are very regular and help secure these pupils' welfare, including pupils with high levels of anxiety and those experiencing mental health problems. Parents told inspectors how important this work was to their children's welfare. One parent stated, 'the school couldn't do any more to make sure my child was supported.'
- Pupils receive good, impartial careers guidance. This service prepares them well for the next phase of education, employment or training.
- Leaders have taken care to ensure that the placements arranged with alternative providers are right for the pupils attending these courses. Staff make regular checks on the progress and attendance of pupils at off-site placements. These pupils are kept safe and are making good progress.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a strength of the school. Pupils' cultural development is particularly strong. Leaders and directors are keen to develop pupils' 'cultural capital', ensuring that all pupils have high-quality cultural experiences. These experiences are part of the school's ethos as a language college. There are few well-developed links with faith groups, however, to contribute to pupils' spiritual understanding.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct during the inspection was exemplary. School records show that this is usually the case. Inspectors saw no disruptive behaviour while pupils were learning. During breaktimes, pupils were sociable and friendly as they walked around the school. Inspectors saw pupils holding doors open for each other and waiting patiently in queues for food.
- Pupils know the school's rules and most follow these rules without adults reminding them. Pupils and parents told inspectors that behaviour had improved. The number of fixed-term exclusions has fallen and is lower than the national average. In the past, leaders excluded disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities more often than the national average; this is no longer the case.
- Leaders recognise that good attendance and punctuality are important in preparing pupils for life beyond school. They actively promote the benefits of good attendance and, because of this, school attendance is well above the national average. The number of pupils who are absent regularly is very low. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved, but is still below that of pupils nationally.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Inspectors' examination of pupils' work showed that pupils are making consistently good progress across virtually all subjects, including English and mathematics. The school's own records of pupils' progress confirm this.
- In 2016, pupils' attainment was slightly above the national average in English and mathematics. Attainment was well above the national average in science, humanities and modern foreign languages. The proportion of pupils who attained the English Baccalaureate group of qualifications was also higher than the national average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils who received grades A*–C in both English and mathematics was above the national average. The school's information and inspection activities show that current pupils are on course to do equally well.
- All groups of pupils are making good progress from their different starting points, including the most able. The school's records show, however, that some disadvantaged pupils, and some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making slightly slower progress than others in the school. This is particularly the case when disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities first join the school. The longer pupils in these groups attend the school, the faster progress they make. In the current Year 10, disadvantaged pupils make faster progress than that of others in the year group.
- Intervention programmes funded through the pupil premium are helping to improve disadvantaged pupils' achievement. Teachers check the progress of disadvantaged pupils carefully. Pupils at risk of falling behind receive high-quality support, in and out of lessons.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are learning well and making good progress from their different starting points. Changes to the curriculum have had a positive impact on the learning of these pupils. Teachers challenge and support these pupils to achieve their potential, particularly as they tackle a broader range of qualifications at key stage 4.
- Until recently, the achievements of the low- and middle-ability pupils were below those of pupils with similar abilities nationally. This was because they took fewer qualifications. This has changed. Leaders have ensured that pupils of all abilities are taking an appropriately challenging number of qualifications at key stage 4.
- All pupils take demanding, relevant courses leading to qualifications that prepare them well for the next stage in their lives. Almost all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, go on to suitable placements at the age of 16.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leadership of the sixth form has improved since the last inspection. Leaders closely check the quality of sixth-form teaching. In addition, leaders arrange an in-depth, annual college review. This review helps leaders to understand the college's strengths and areas that need improvement. Leaders also use the findings of the annual review to plan in-service training for teachers.
- College leaders ensure that students have access in three broad pathways to individual programmes that meet 16–19 study requirements. The curriculum is broad and balanced because the college supports classes with small numbers, to create a varied post-16 programme.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective in reducing the risks young people face during this phase of education. Leaders manage the college site safely and students wear lanyards to show that they are authorised to be on the site. Students told inspectors that they feel safe at college.
- There is a culture of ambition in the sixth form. Leaders set students high targets which they raise if students meet them. Teachers and support staff help students who are falling behind to catch up. One student told inspectors, 'we are all seen as individuals'.
- Leaders make carefully planned use of bursaries to help some students with the costs of studying, which helps them to complete their courses. The progress disadvantaged students make in the sixth form is similar to the progress that other students make nationally; this is the case in both academic and vocational courses.
- College staff contribute to students' personal development and welfare. Staff support students well while they are at college. The college has effective mental health and 'mindfulness' programmes that support students experiencing pressures, particularly during examination periods.
- Students are overwhelmingly positive about their experience in the sixth form. They recognise the role that college leaders play in ensuring their progress and are appreciative of the support they receive.

- Sixth-form students conduct themselves maturely and focus conscientiously on their studies. Partly because of students' positive attitudes, attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Rigorous systems are in place to support good attendance and students arrive punctually at the beginning of the day and to lessons.
- A consistent approach to teaching, learning and assessment across the college prepares students well for examinations. Teachers use a limited range of strategies, however, to meet students' wide-ranging needs. This limits the opportunities for students to make exceptional progress.
- Examination results show that students have made good progress since finishing their GCSE studies. The progress made by current students is good in academic and vocational courses, and in almost all subjects. Students make above-average progress in only a few subjects, however.
- The college's extra-curricular programme captures the interests and imagination of most students. Students value these experiences, which include the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, Chinese classes, archery, animation club, taekwondo, and trips to Portugal, Wales and Paris.
- The sixth-form pastoral programme is well thought out and enables students to develop a range of social, personal and employability skills. Careers advice and guidance are effective in the sixth form. A well-structured guidance programme prepares students for the next phase of their education and employment, including for apprenticeships.
- Almost all students complete their sixth-form studies. Last year, 93% of students completed Year 12 and continued into Year 13. This is because staff give good advice to students before they join the sixth form and then support them well during their time at the college.
- Work-related learning available to all students contributes well to their sixth-form experience. Most students choose to take up work placements. Employers regularly visit the college as part of a structured careers programme.
- Students go on to a wide range of destinations after they leave the college, including to higher education and employment. All went on to a suitable destination in 2016. Increasing numbers go on to higher education. In 2016, 85% of students went on to their first-choice destination when they left the college.
- Students at the college have a range of opportunities to develop their skills in mathematics and English. Students can study for A levels in English, mathematics and further mathematics. In addition, students can re-take GCSE examinations in English and mathematics, and have a good track record of improving their grades. The college also offers alternative accredited programmes for the small numbers of students unlikely to be successful in GCSE English and mathematics.

School details

Unique reference number	138832
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10019569

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	840
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	210
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Adam Bird
Executive Principal	Paul Heery
Telephone number	0115 917 0424
Website	www.aldermanwhite.notts.sch.uk
Email address	white@whpfederation.org
Date of previous inspection	26–27 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

- Alderman White School is an averaged-sized secondary school.
- The school's post-16 students are educated on a separate site, known as Bramcote College.
- The school is part of a small educational trust, The White Hills Park Federation Trust, which also includes Bramcote School. A single governing body for both schools is known as the board of directors. The executive principal leads both schools.
- Most pupils are from a White British background, with some pupils from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- A small number of pupils from the school have alternative arrangements for part of their education through three providers: Central College; Fuel Education and Stone Soup Academy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 49 lessons throughout the school and in a range of subjects. Some lessons were jointly observed with a school leader.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, senior and middle leaders and members of the board of directors. An inspector also spoke with staff at units that offer off-site training for a small number of pupils at the school.
- Inspectors considered 118 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and 105 free-text responses from parents.
- The inspection team listened to the views of pupils in key stage 3, key stage 4 and in the sixth form during discussions, and considered 92 questionnaire responses from pupils.
- Inspectors considered 62 responses to a staff questionnaire and talked with staff after lessons to seek their views.

Inspection team

Ellenor Beighton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Dave Bennett	Ofsted Inspector
Gee Kader	Ofsted Inspector
Russell Barr	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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